

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 2 and 10 were previously cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1, 3-9, and 11-13 are pending. Claims 1, 6, and 11 are amended. Claims 1 and 11 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by amending the claims to overcome the Examiner's objections to the claims. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicant did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Examiner's Interview

The Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended by Examiner Payer to Applicant's representative, Carl T. Thomsen, Reg. No. 50,786 in the interviews conducted on January 12 and 18, 2006. The amendments made herein are those discussed during the interviews.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 1, 3-9, and 11-13 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objections to the claims.

In response, claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended to address the issues pointed out by the Examiner. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 11 are in condition for allowance. Independent claim 11 is believed to be generic.

Information Disclosure Statement

A Letter Submitting References Requested by the Examiner is being filed concurrently herewith to properly disclose EP 0 186 222 B1 and USP 4,670,983 as mentioned on page 2 of the specification of the application filed on March 15, 2004. No fee or statement is required since these references were disclosed in the application papers as originally filed on March 15, 2004.

Drawings

It is gratefully appreciated that the Examiner has accepted the drawings.

Specification Objection

The Examiner has objected to the specification because of an informality.

In order to overcome this objection, Applicant has amended paragraph [0014] the specification in order to correct the deficiency pointed out by the Examiner.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1, 6, and 11 because of several informalities. In order to overcome this objection, the Applicant has amended claims 1, 6, and 11 in order to correct the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 11, and the claims depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000. If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent,

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and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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